



Pilgrims of Hope

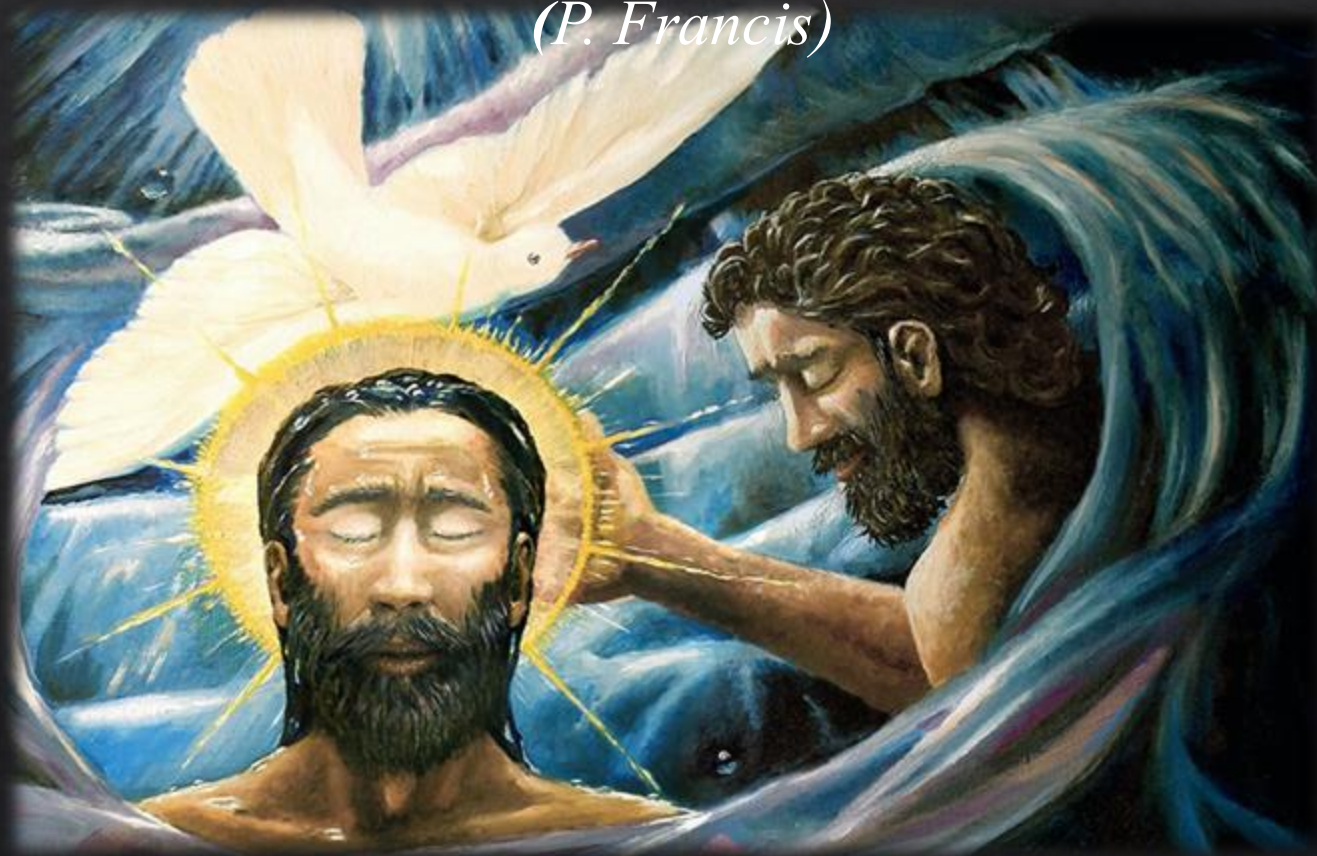
*in Communities
of Diversity*

MOHMOV
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Synod (‘walking together’) describes structures that embody the ecclesiology of Vatican II “*Lumen Gentium* sets out a vision of the nature and mission of the Church as communion..... her nature as People of God on pilgrimage through history towards the heavenly homeland, in which all her members are by virtue of baptism honoured with the same dignity as children of God and appointed to the same mission” (ITC, *Synodality* # 40)

“Synodality is the way of being the Church today according to the will of God, in a dynamic of discerning and listening together to the voice of the Holy Spirit.”

(P. Francis)



The Aim of the Synod: The Synodal Conversion of the Church

Renewing our
structures and
processes so that all
can participate in a
trinitarian
communion that lives
out a shared
commitment to
Jesus' mission



To hold a “synod” means to walk together. I think this is truly the most wonderful experience we can have: To belong to a people walking; journeying through history together with their Lord who walks among us. We are not alone; we do not walk alone. We are part of the one flock of Christ that walks together

(4 Oct 2013 Feast of St Francis of Assisi)

It is not enough to have a synod; you must be a synod.

The Church needs intense internal sharing: a living dialogue between the Pastors and between the Pastors and the faithful (Synod of Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, 2019)



Pilgrimage:
a journey undertaken for a religious motive; pilgrims commonly seek a specific place that has been sanctified by association with a divinity or other holy personage; evident in all world religions; was also important in the religions of ancient Greece / Rome (Britanica)





- Pilgrimage serves as a social interaction platform that fosters harmony in multicultural societies (Rohan)
- Role of communities / individuals in shaping pilgrimage experiences?

How to explain Abanese's papal pilgrimage (AFR 19 May)

- Sudden embrace of Catholic heritage
- Previously non-mass-attending p.m. who did not swear with his hand on the bible
- Catholic values of social justice / compassion helped shape his government's 'no-one left behind' approach to social / economic policy
- Expressed admiration for late Pope Francis' humility, concern for the poor, inclusion



Experience of that which is *'other'*

- ❖ Historically, religious experiences have occurred at founding moments of a religious tradition
- ❖ Believers regularly celebrate such events, and often search for something similar (pilgrimage?)

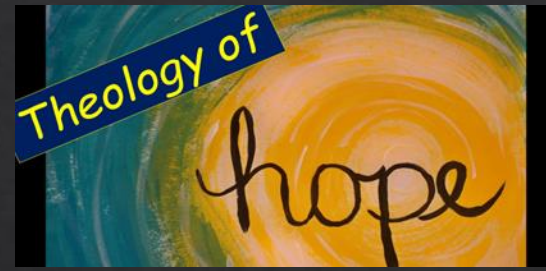
❖ Muslims - Mohammed's overwhelming, painful experience of receiving revelation from Allah (Koran)

❖ Buddhists - honour the light that filled Buddha's mind under the Bodhi tree

❖ Christians – the life altering conversion of Paul received on the road to Damascus

(Stanton L. Jones, 1998)





- Hope is the door that opens onto the future
(Pope Francis, April 2017)
- Hope is a humble, hidden seed of life that, with time, will develop into a large tree
- It is like some invisible yeast that allows the whole dough to grow, that brings flavour to all aspects of life

(Mt.13:31, Mk 4:30, Lk 13:18)

- **Hope** is the *active* expectation God will heal and transform the world (Moltmann)
- **Hope** does not mean denial of suffering / injustice, nor that humans can heal creation apart from the power of God's grace
- **Hope** is based on what God has promised to do in the future; calls us to witness to those promises in actions of healing / justice today



Communities of Diversity



Socio-Political Classes



Photography by Adrian Kinski Jr



Take a little time to identify the communities to which you belong: gender, generation, religion, ethnicity, hobbies, skill sets, dis/ability, sexual preference, family.....

Then share with your neighbours



Our encounters
with God remain a
mystery – but are
revealed to us
through our
contextualised,
lived experience



Culture: The way people in groups react to their environment (Gittens)



a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, norms and social practices

Culture

Something rarely questioned that becomes part of us – we teach to others without really knowing why e.g. ‘that’s the way things are’

The framework within which we situate almost everything we come to know

That which gives us a sense of belonging



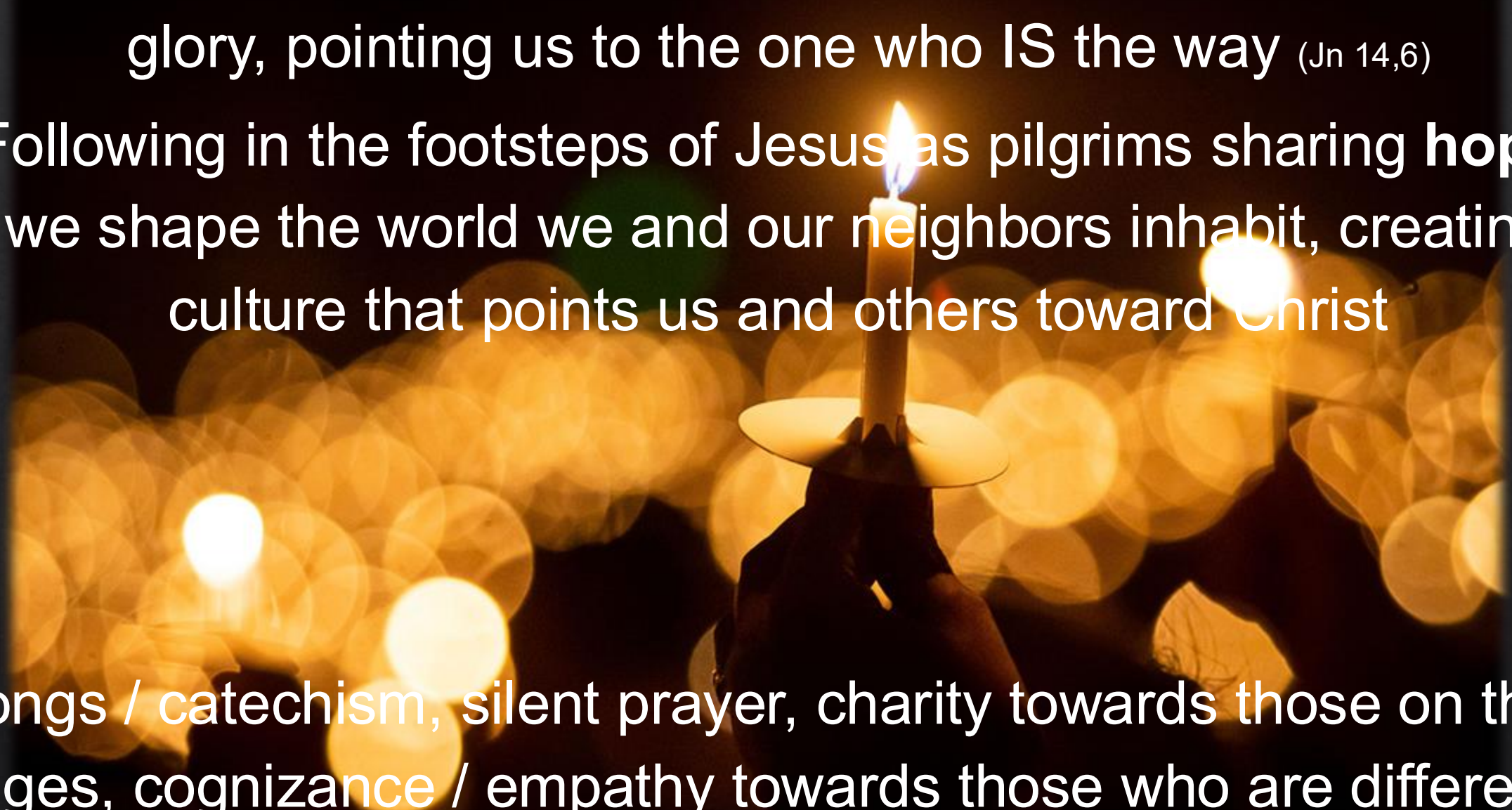
CULTURE:

- not an abstract concept; not something we choose to engage with / resist / deny
- HOW we engage with it is important
- Not just things we make but also what we do



**Top 50
Metal Bands
of All Time**



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- Culture - not just why or how we exist but a tool for God's glory, pointing us to the one who IS the way (Jn 14,6)
 - Following in the footsteps of Jesus as pilgrims sharing **hope**, we shape the world we and our neighbors inhabit, creating culture that points us and others toward Christ
 - Songs / catechism, silent prayer, charity towards those on the edges, cognizance / empathy towards those who are different from us—these are all cultural realities (Greeson & Quinn)



- ◆...has been compared *to the air we breathe*, which we really only notice when it is absent
- ◆....a set of norms according to which things are run or simply “*are*” in a particular society, country or organization

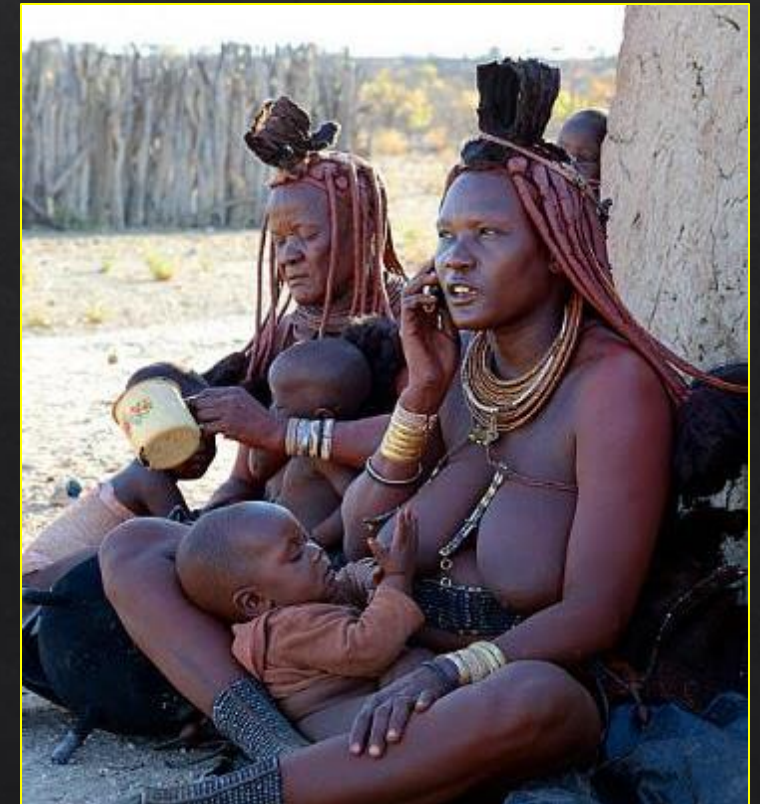
cultural solutions



- ❖ People in all cultures face common human challenges or problems for which they must find solutions
- ❖ The range of alternative solutions to a culture's challenges is limited
- ❖ Within a given culture, there will be preferred solutions to these challenges
- ❖ Over time, the preferred solutions shape the culture; basic assumptions about beliefs, values, norms and social practices form cultural patterns

Culture is a living system. Every culture is in the process of adapting to changes in the world around us

“Cultures change constantly because individuals in society – the architects of culture – are constantly changing their plan for a successful life” (Luzbetak SVD, 1988)









As we journey through life, we are often invited to consider what is different and make moves towards 'crossing over'.

What experiences (difficult / joyful) have you had of entering into the world of 'the other'?



- Like common ways to communicate; we are in a constant dance of receiving culture and being formed by it – views of acquaintances, movies, music, food, literature
- All cultures are in this dance of change and renewal
- It's inside us; a way of making meaning of ourselves, our experiences, our hopes, our communities, our lives (Greeson & Quinn)



<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=youtube+one+legged+dancer+bgt&mid=BC90BB23B1EFF6E39981BC90B23B1EFF6E39981&FORM=VIRE>

Intercultural Sensitivity: ability to develop a positive attitude towards understanding and caring about cultural differences, leading to effective intercultural communication (Chen and Starosta)

Inter-culturally sensitive people develop:

- ❖ Strong self-esteem
- ❖ Good self-monitoring
- ❖ Open-mindedness
- ❖ Empathy
- ❖ Interaction involvement
- ❖ Ability to suspend judgment



- Developing competence in this area leads to mutual understanding among culturally distinct groups
- Having regular and varied contact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds assists in gaining skills
- Initial stress in new environments can lead to adaptation; persons can change to meet demands of new cultural space to reduce constant feelings of being 'different' (Kim)
- Who is prepared to change / adapt when cultures meet?



*Intercultural
Communication*

Intercultural Transformation



- ❖ Characteristics (in new environment):
 - increased functional capacity
 - increased psychological health
 - intercultural identity that surpasses original cultural boundaries (Kim)
- ❖ Inevitable setbacks / difficult situations inherent in intercultural environments can lead to an increased ability to see the world (and people in it) with new eyes



- ❖ As ministers in this multicultural world, we need cultural variation for our own authenticity – being and acting in the world with different eyes and heart...
- ❖ ...so we can be pilgrims of hope in communities of diversity